

Read the News You Can Use Today!



May 20, 2021 - Vol. 2, Issue 5

nursing.iowa.gov



News & Updates

New Board Members/Positions Announced

The Iowa Board of Nursing consists of a seven member board of individuals appointed by the governor. For the term May 1, 2021 through April 30, 2022, the board members are as follows:

Mark G. Odden, BSN, MBA, CRNA, ARNP
Chairperson
Representing Nursing Practice
Term ends 2022

Nancy Kramer, EdD, ARNP, CPNP, CNE
Vice-Chairperson
Representing Nursing Education
Term ends 2022

Stephanie Carr, MSN, RN
Representing Nursing Practice
Term ends 2023

Amy Beltz, LPN
Representing Nursing Practice
Term ends 2023

Amber Mahrt, MSN, RN
Representing Nursing Education
Term ends 2024

BJ Hoffman
Representing the Public
Term ends 2023

Gordon Goettsch, DDS
Representing the Public
Term ends 2022

To learn more about the board appointment process, see the [Iowa Talent Bank Boards & Commissions](#) webpage.

May is National Mental Health Awareness Month

Submitted by Rhonda Ruby, MS, RN, INAP Coordinator

The month of May is an important time to raise awareness regarding mental health issues and recognize the impact it can have on healthcare workers. The wellbeing and emotional resilience of healthcare workers are key components in maintaining essential healthcare services. Healthcare workers were faced with challenges like never before due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Effect on Healthcare Workers

In a study published in the article “The Traumatic Stress in Healthcare Workers during COVID-19 Pandemic: A Review of the Immediate Impact” (Benfante, 2020), the potential mental health effects of the pandemic and healthcare workers was examined and revealed a notable impact. In the article and in a national survey published from the Kaiser Family Foundation (Mensik, 2021), the following was highlighted:

- More than 60% of frontline healthcare workers reported the pandemic has negatively impacted their mental health.
- More than 69% of healthcare workers reported feeling burned out at work.
- The presence of trauma-related stress, with a prevalence ranging from 7.4 to 35%, among women, nurses, frontline workers, and in workers who experienced physical symptoms.
- A high prevalence of anxious and depressive symptoms among women healthcare workers and nurses.
- Being female, younger, a frontline worker, a nurse, having less work experience, exposure to infected people, poor social support, access barriers, insomnia and physical symptoms are all common risk factors for traumatic symptoms in healthcare workers.

Sources of Distress

Healthcare workers faced multiple sources of distress that impacted their wellbeing during the pandemic. Some stressors cited included the spread of the virus, worrying about their own

health, the health of loved ones, changes in the work environment, psychological distress, actions that may violate their moral codes, financial concerns, (Greenberg et al., 2020) and also feeling stigmatized when seeking treatment. According to a national survey published from the Kaiser Family Foundation (Mensik, 2021):

- Healthcare workers who didn't get help cited being too busy or unable to get time off work, feeling afraid or embarrassed or not being able to afford it.
- About 13% of healthcare workers surveyed reported accessing mental health services or medications.
- About 18% said they needed such services but didn't get them.
- Among those working in hospitals, 56% said their intensive-care units were over capacity at some point during the pandemic.
- In both hospitals and nursing homes, 34% said they ran out of personal protective equipment at some point during the pandemic.

Resources Available

For those who find themselves struggling we encourage you to reach out. The Iowa Board of Nursing has a [comprehensive list of mental health resources available](#) on their website that can be utilized. If you would like further assistance with substance use and or mental health concerns, please contact the Iowa Nurse Assistance Program:

Rhonda Ruby, MS, RN
INAP Program Coordinator
Rhonda.Ruby@iowa.gov
(515) 725 4008

Michele Royer, LBSW
INAP Case Manager
Michele.Royer@iowa.gov
(515) 725 3389

References:

Benfante, Di Tella, et al, "Traumatic Stress in Healthcare Workers during COVID-19 Pandemic: A Review of the Immediate Impact." *Frontiers in Psychol*, Oct. 2020.

Mensik, H., "Healthcare workers say they need mental health services, but many aren't getting them." *HealthCareDiv*, April 2021.

**Iowa Healthiest State Initiative -
#Make it OK**

The Iowa Healthiest State Initiative has an abundance of resources supporting the Make It Ok campaign to bring awareness to mental health and to end the stigma around this topic. Subscribe to their blog, listen to podcasts, read about workplace initiatives and print mental health awareness posters for your workplace.



It's OK to talk about mental illness — talking makes people feel less alone. #MakeltOK is a community campaign to reduce stigma by starting conversations. Nurses are in a unique position to shed light on this topic and can benefit from the available resources. Learn more: [Make It Okay Resource Page](#)